

Message Text

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13

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, SP, US

SUBJ: PRESS COMMENT ON SHIP LOANS

REF: MADRID 1174

1. APRIL 10 ISSUE OF MADRID AFTERNOON DAILY INFORMACIONES CARRIES EDITORIAL ENTITLED " NEEDS OF OURNAVY AND THE USA", WHICH REFERS TO AMBASSADOR RIVERO'S LETTER TO PRESS REGARDING SHIP LOANS. SUBSTANCE OF EDITORIAL ALSO APPEARED APRIL 11 IN MORNING DAILY YA. EDITORIAL STATES IT HAS TREATED ISSUE OF SPANISH- US DEFENSE COOPERATION NOT AS POLEMIC BUT AS CONTRIBUTION TO PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING. COMMENTS, THEREFORE, WERE NOT DESIGNED TO DAMAGE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES BUT CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR IMPROVEMENT. ACKNOWLEDGE AMBASSADOR'S LETTER AS CONTRIBUTION TO DISCUSSION THEY HAD UNDERTAKEN.

2. QUOTES STATEMENTS BY NATO SECGEN BROSIO, NEW YORK TIMES, AND AMBASSADOR RIVERO (IN SEPTEMBER 1972) UNDERSCORING IMPORTANCE OF SPANISH BASES AND STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF SPANISH TERRITORY. EDITORIAL NOTES THAT THIS WELLACKNOWLEDGED STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF COURSE REQUIRES THAT SPAIN HAVE MILITARY MEANS TO DEFEND ITS TERRITORY.

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3. CONTINUES BY ARGUING THAT BASES ARE FOR SPAIN TODAY MORE A RISK THAN A PROTECTION. SPAIN WOULD NOT MIND THIS CONDITION IF IT WERE A CONTRIBUTION TO WESTERN DEFENSE AND IT RECEIVED ADEQUATE COUNTERPART. SPAIN HOWEVER NOT IN NATO. THE SITUATION THEREFORE LACKS RECIPROCITY. MOREOVER BETWEEN 1945 AND 1971 SPAIN RECIEVED ONLY 2.4 BILLION OF TOTAL OF 49.3 BILLION US GAVE EUROPE. CITED NETHERLANDS, YUGOSLAVIA, TURKEY, PAKISTAN, GREECE, IRAN AND BRAZIL HAVING RECEIVED MORE US AID THAN SPAIN.

4. EDITORIAL NOTES THAT US AMBASSADOR CLAIMS THREE DESTROYERS OFFERED WERE VALUABLE TO US ON ACTIVE SERVICE, BUT ADDED HOWEVER THAT RESPONSIBLE SPANISH NAVAL OFFICIALS FELT THAT THEY WERE NOT IN GOOD CONDITION AND REJECTED THEM. WHILE LETTER OF 1970 AGREEMENT IS SPECIFIC ABOUT SHIPS TO BE LOANED, IN PROPER SPIRIT OF AGREEMENT SHIPS SHOULD BE LOANED IN GOOD CONDITON. SHIPS WERE NOT REJECTED LIGHTLY, BUT BECAUSE THEY WERE FOUND TO BE UNDERSTANDABLY WORN BY THEIR LONG SERVICE IN US FLEET. WHILE THERE MAY BE NO QUESTION THAT THEY WERE SEA WORTHY ENOUGH TO REACH SPAIN, INSPECTIONS OF THEM SHOWED STRONG POSSIBILITY OF A SERIES OF FUTURE BREAKDOWNS AND PROBLEMS THAT MIGHT REQUIRE VERY COSTLY REPARIS.

5. ACKNOWLEDGING THAT US HAS COMPLIED " QUANTITATIVELY" WITH AGREEMENT REQUIREMENTS, EDITORIAL ASSERTS, QUALITATIVELY IT COULD DO BETTER.

6. CONCLUDES BY REAFFIRMING THAT IT IS IN INTEREST OF US AND ATLANTIC ALLIANCE THAT SPAIN BE CAPABLE OF DEFENDING ITSELF AND ITS SPHERE OF INFLUENCE ON ITS OWN AND BEARING ITS SHARE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEFENDING MEDITERRANEAN. THEREFORE, IT WOULD PROFIT US TO HELP SPAIN OBTAIN A TRULY OPERATIVE NAVY WITH SOME DETERRENT CAPABILITY.

RIVERO

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